

Parish Policy Concerning Weddings

Mary, Queen of Heaven Parish welcomes you for the celebration of your marriage in our church. As a Catholic Parish, Mary, Queen of Heaven follows the teachings of the Church concerning the Sacrament of Matrimony. The parish is bound by the laws of marriage established by the Catholic Church for the whole world and by laws and guidelines established by the Bishop of Covington.

Since many weddings take place here we have drawn up these wedding guidelines to let you know our expectations of you as you come to seal your love in the sacrament of marriage here in our beloved church. We will do whatever we can to help you to celebrate your wedding joyfully and with the dignity due to the sacred sacramental rites and to the holy place in which they are performed. May your wedding be one in which you and your families and guests, perceive love, commitment, maturity, and a joyful union with God throughout the entire church service.

WHO MAY BE MARRIED AT MARY, QUEEN OF HEAVEN

Weddings may be scheduled at Mary, Queen of Heaven if either the bride or the groom fulfills the requirements of our Active Parishioner Policy. Any member of the parish, who is free to marry, as far as the Catholic Church is concerned, has the right to celebrate this sacrament in the parish church. Others may be married at Mary, Queen of Heaven provided the Pastor of both bride and groom gives permission for his parishioner to be married here.

Persons who are not members of Mary, Queen of Heaven Parish must have a priest or deacon other than a member of our staff give the necessary instructions and officiate at the wedding. The priest or deacon will be expected to collect the required papers for eventual filing at Mary, Queen of Heaven.

In fairness to the people who regularly contribute to the upkeep of the church, we ask of non-parishioners a contribution of \$650. A deposit of \$325 is required before the wedding can be scheduled on the parish calendar. The remaining balance is due one week before the wedding. Registered active parishioners are asked for an offering of \$550. A deposit of \$275 is required at your first meeting with a member of the clergy. The remaining balance is due at your final meeting with the cleric. All checks should be made payable to Mary, Queen of Heaven Church.

TIME OF THE WEDDING

Wedding rehearsals held on either Thursday or Friday may begin no earlier than 6PM and no later than 7PM. Since the parish has two Saturday evening Masses, Saturday weddings at Mary, Queen of Heaven are celebrated between 11:30AM and 1:30 PM. Please make your photographer aware of our Saturday evening Mass schedule so picture taking is completed before 2:30 PM.

HOW TO GET STARTED

At least nine months before your anticipated wedding date, call the Parish Office at Mary, Queen of Heaven (859-525-6909) to check on the availability of the church and to set up a time to begin preparations with a member of the parish clergy.

Until we have the following we cannot confirm a date for the wedding of non-parishioners:

1. Letter from the Pastor of either the bride or the groom granting permission to marry outside your parish.
2. The complete contact information (name of the priest or deacon who will officiate at the wedding, Diocese or Religious Order, Parish name, address and phone number) of the priest or deacon who will instruct and officiate.
3. The full contribution of \$650 or at least a deposit of \$325.

You are required to attend a diocesan wedding preparation program and a Natural Family Planning program. These programs provide valuable instructions to spouses-to-be. The person preparing you for marriage will give you information about these programs.

You must contact our Music Director at 859-525-6909 to plan your wedding music. Please read the Music Guidelines in this document before contacting the Music Director at 859-525-6909. The fee of \$550 or \$650 includes a \$125 payment for our Parish Musician. If you choose an outside musician from the approved list, who charges in excess of \$125, the marrying couple will be responsible for paying the additional amount.

Sometime before your wedding, your cleric will discuss with you your wedding liturgy. Catholics marrying Catholics are encouraged to have their wedding within Mass, but are not required to do so. Catholics who are marrying baptized non-Catholics can be given permission to have their weddings during Mass. If one party is not baptized, a dispensation from the Bishop is required and the wedding ceremony cannot take place within Mass. Marriage preparation requires three meetings with a cleric.

DOCUMENTS NEEDED

1. A current annotated original baptismal certificate is required for each Catholic party, and should be brought to the initial meeting with your cleric. The Catholic baptismal certificate should be dated no more than six months prior to the 1st meeting with the cleric and requires the date of Confirmation. A proof of baptism is also required for any baptized non-Catholic. If a copy of a baptismal certificate is not available, then a signed statement by someone who was present at the baptism, stating the date, church and place of baptism, and the formula that was used by the minister will suffice. If one party has not been baptized, your cleric will have to get a special dispensation for the marriage. In the case where a Catholic is marrying a non-baptized person, the wedding ceremony cannot take place within Mass.
2. For non-parishioners of Mary, Queen of Heaven, a letter from the pastor of the Catholic party granting permission for the marriage to be celebrated at Mary, Queen of Heaven is required.
3. Certificates of attendance at both the diocesan wide marriage preparation programs and the Natural Family Planning program.
4. A civil marriage license, obtained no more than 30 days before the wedding date, must be brought to the rehearsal. To apply for a marriage license both parties must apply together.

MUSIC GUIDELINES

Planning the wedding music program is usually done about three or four months before the wedding. All music to be performed in church before, during, and after the ceremony must be approved by the Music Director at 859-525-6909.

A planning session (one) is usually scheduled to determine the music program. While the bride and groom may bring to the planning session whomever they wish, experience has proven that a large entourage of family and advisors is counter-productive. For this session it is most helpful if you come with some ideas about what kinds of musicians you would like (e.g., singer? trumpeter?), as the choice of music depends on the musicians used. Please do not make prior commitments with musicians or choice of music. All music, singers, and musicians must meet with the Music Director's approval. The marrying couple are responsible for any fee to singers and/or musicians in excess of \$125.

SONGS In keeping with the liturgical norms of the Diocese, Mary, Queen of Heaven requires that all song selections be chosen from the repertoire of sacred or liturgical

music. They must be religious in their text, clearly referring to God by name in a significant way, quoting Scripture, or the like. Popular songs that happen to mention God in an incidental manner do not thereby qualify as sacred music. Secular or popular songs, therefore, are not allowed before, during, or after the ceremony, and should not be requested. This applies even if the songs would be played without text as instrumentals. Beautiful as they may be, popular songs belong at the reception rather than the church liturgy, just as pieces like "Ave Maria" and "On Eagle's Wings" would sound out of place at the reception. The fact that certain pop songs may have been used at other churches does not qualify them as acceptable. Some pieces may also be objectionable on the basis of their musical style, if they are considered to be in conflict with the dignity of the Sacrament and the house of God. You are welcome to suggest pieces of your own choosing, or song suggestions of both traditional and contemporary pieces are available if you would like them.

SINGERS The Parish has a cantor that can be at every wedding to sing. If you are bringing in your own soloist, the Pastor must approve your choice of performer prior to your wedding. Also, try to obtain a list of songs in that person's repertoire from which choices can be made. Most singers prefer to sing no more than five or six solos. The marrying couple are responsible for paying any additional amount charged by the singer(s) in excess of \$125.

INSTRUMENTS

Traditional instruments are welcome, such as trumpet, violin, flute, guitar, harp, etc. Certain instruments which would create a bizarre effect in church (e.g., harmonica, bagpipes, accordion, marimba, etc.) are not allowed. Also, the use of recorded music at any point is not allowed.

FLOWERS

Elaborate floral displays are really not necessary at Mary, Queen of Heaven Church. We are grateful if you leave your flowers to enhance our Sunday liturgy. No decorations are to be placed on, in, or around the baptismal font in the rear of the church. Any departures from these guidelines **MUST** be approved by the Pastor.

If decorations are attached to the pews, they must be attached without the use of tape or tacks. Aisle candles must be approved and be shielded with glass chimneys.

Your florist should provide the white aisle runner, if desired. The length of the middle aisle is 62 feet. There are 18 rows of pews. The church seats approximately 300 people.

All aisle decorations and the runner must be removed immediately after the ceremony. Please be sure that your florist or the ushers are alerted to take care of this. We cannot be responsible for candlesticks or other florist equipment left after the wedding.

No flowers, flower petals, etc. may be tossed in the center aisle at any time.

PHOTOGRAPHERS

Flash and extra lighting may not be used during the Mass and/or wedding ceremony. Photographers are never allowed in the sanctuary. In taking pictures of the entrance procession, they should be in the back half of the middle aisle - no closer than that to the altar area of the church. TV cameras may be used only from the side or rear aisles. In general, be sure that your photographer is discrete and unobtrusive. Couples are urged to keep the time for picture taking session after the ceremony as brief as possible. A professional, well organized photographer should be able to complete the session in a half hour. At all times, the photographer and the bridal party must remain respectful in the church since it is a holy place of worship.

MISCELLANEOUS ITEMS

If either the bride or groom is not Catholic, a non-Catholic, baptized clergyman may be invited to participate in the wedding pending approval of the pastor.

The deposit is required to reserve the date for your wedding and the balance is due at the final meeting with your clergyman.

The Sacristan will be on hand for the rehearsal and the wedding to insure that all the details are taken care of.

Mary, Queen of Heaven will provide liturgical ministers for weddings if neither the bride nor groom knows of anyone specifically commissioned as Extraordinary Ministers of Holy Communion or Lector. Anyone serving as a Lector or Extraordinary Minister of Holy Communion must receive the approval of the pastor.

The bride and her attendants may gather in the Narthex meeting room before the wedding, and dress there if they wish. The groom and the groomsmen may gather in the vesting sacristy. The rooms must be left in a neat and orderly condition.

Mary, Queen of Heaven is air-conditioned.

Alcoholic beverages of any type are not permitted on church property or the parking lot. No food or drink is permitted in the church. Alcoholic beverages are not to be consumed before the rehearsal or the wedding ceremony.

Throwing rice, confetti, flower petals, birdseed, etc., is not permitted. Likewise, blowing bubbles and/or releasing balloons are not allowed.

CONCLUSION

The official record of your marriage will be kept here at Mary, Queen of Heaven Church. If in the future you need copies of your marriage record, contact the parish office. If you have any questions, please call the parish office at 525-6909. We wish to do all we can to make your great day a memorably beautiful experience, counting always on your good cooperation.

September, 2018